



# HAP CHECK NEWS

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH OWNER NEWSLETTER

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## **WARNING-Illegal Garage Conversions Will Cost You**

Did you know that illegal garage conversions are subject to a \$1,000 fine and if occupied, possible tenant relocation benefits of \$3,900, as well as prosecution? In addition, as a property owner, the Housing Authority could terminate your contract for that property.

Illegal garage conversions and other Code Violations are a problem throughout Southern California and the City of Long Beach takes Code Violations very seriously. The City proactively seeks out violations with City staff inspectors and trained volunteers who spot and report Code Violations during neighborhood cleanups.

Residents are also strongly urged to report not only illegal garage conversions, but also any Code Violations to the City's Code Violation hotline, 562-570-CODE (2633). If you notice any violations or, if you have any questions regarding garage conversions, call the hotline number.

Remember, a garage is meant to store vehicles and personal items and not to serve as a living quarters. An illegal garage conversion may cost someone his or her life and this is why the City regards the enforcement of illegal conversions as a priority.

## **How to Spot an Illegal Garage Conversion**

Garages that have been converted illegally are extremely dangerous places for people to live due to their inherent health, safety, electrical, plumbing and structural problems.

For example, improperly installed electrical wiring may cause fires, improper venting of water heaters or heaters may cause asphyxiation resulting in possible injury and/or death and plumbing installed not according to the Building Code may lead to other health hazards.

In addition, other health and safety issues associated with illegal garage conversions may include not having the proper amount of

emergency exits or windows, not having fire resistant construction materials and insufficient fire prevention construction materials, and insufficient fire prevention systems or smoke alarms.

If you notice any of the following items, it could be an illegal garage conversion:

- A garage door is removed, where normally there would be one e.g. in front of a curb cut and/or drive way.
- The interior of the garage has a bed, refrigerator, microwave, stove, etc.
- The interior of the garage is not available for off street parking.
- A mailbox is next to the front door.
- For the most part all single family residence require a garage. If it's not there something is wrong!

In addition, illegal garage conversions can affect the quality of life in your neighborhood. Improper and illegal occupancy of a converted garage increases overall density in the City, which can increase the demand for City services and impacts on-street parking.

**Don't Forget:  
New Owner Orientation Sessions**

The next Housing Authority Owner/Manager Workshop is scheduled for November 19, from 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm at the Housing Authority Office, 521 E 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Long Beach, CA, 90802 (on 4<sup>th</sup> Street between Atlantic and Linden Avenues). Seating is limited, so please RSVP by sending an email to [Monique.lathrop@longbeach.gov](mailto:Monique.lathrop@longbeach.gov) or calling Monique Lathrop at 562-570-5490.

**Thanksgiving Holiday**

The Housing Authority Bureau will be closed Thursday, November 27 and Friday, November 28 for the Thanksgiving Holiday. The Bureau will resume normal business hours at 7:30 am on Monday, December 1.

On behalf of the Housing Authority Bureau, we wish you all a very Happy Thanksgiving!

